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(54) [Title of the Invention] Ultrasonic diagnostic device

(57) [Abstract]

[Aim] To provide an ultrasonic diagnostic device in which high-brightness B-mode tomographic images can be obtained in B mode and Doppler mode real time simultaneous display.

[Configuration] A transmission pulse duty converter 8 provided in a transmission pulse generator 9 supplies a transmission pulse of which the transmission pulse duty in Doppler mode is smaller than the transmission pulse duty in B mode to a driver 12. The driver 12 amplifies this to the level of the driver driving voltage from a driver driving voltage generator 10, and supplies it to an ultrasonic probe 1 and a subject being examined is irradiated with an ultrasonic pulse. B mode tomographic images and Doppler mode blood flow information are obtained by ultrasonic tomographic imaging means 14 and ultrasonic blood flow information measuring means 15 by means of the echo signals from the subject being examined which are received by the ultrasonic probe 1. The B mode and Doppler mode are switched periodically by means of control signals generated by a system controller 6.

2 transmitter

12 driver

6 system controller

signal D/signal E

8 transmission pulse duty converter

signal A

9 transmission pulse generator

7 transmission trigger pulse generator

13 amplifier

3 received echo processor

14 ultrasonic tomographic imaging means

15 ultrasonic blood flow information measuring means

4 digital scan converter part

5 display part

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## [Scope of the Patent Claims]

[Claim 1] An ultrasonic diagnostic device provided with: an ultrasonic probe for irradiating a subject being examined with ultrasonic waves and receiving echo signals from the subject being examined; a transmitter which comprises a transmission pulse generator for generating transmission pulses of which the transmission pulse duty in Doppler mode is smaller than the transmission pulse duty in B mode, and which supplies a driver pulse to the abovementioned ultrasonic probe; ultrasonic tomographic imaging means for obtaining B mode tomographic images from echo signals received from inside the subject being examined; ultrasonic blood flow information measuring means for obtaining blood flow information in Doppler mode by means of echo signals received from inside the subject being examined; and a system controller for generating control signals for periodically switching between B mode and Doppler mode.

## [Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Field of Industrial Application] The present invention relates to an ultrasonic diagnostic device for producing images of structure and movement inside an organism.

[0002]

[Prior Art] The acoustic power of an ultrasonic diagnostic device is generally subject to fixed regulations for the implementation of safe ultrasonic diagnosis of a subject being examined. The acoustic energy irradiated into the subject being examined in B mode and Doppler mode of an ultrasonic diagnostic device is such that in B mode a scan is carried out with a single or double transmission pulse being sent and received over a broad range in order to broaden the bandwidth of the transmission pulse, while in Doppler mode a multiple transmission pulse is continuously scanned in the same direction in order to narrow the bandwidth of the transmission pulse, and therefore when the level of the high voltage driver pulse is the same, the average exposure to acoustic energy

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endured inside the subject being examined is greater in the case of Doppler mode than of B mode.

[0003] With conventional ultrasonic diagnostic devices, as shown in Figure 4, in order to resolve this problem, control signals are supplied by a system controller 6 to a driver driving voltage generator 10, whereby the level of the high-voltage drive pulses are lower in Doppler mode than in B mode so that the average amount of acoustic energy to which the inside of the subject being examined is exposed is reduced.

[0004]

[Problems to be Resolved by the Invention] B mode and Doppler mode real time simultaneous display is generally in common use for cardiac diagnosis and the like, and this is carried out by periodically switching between B mode and Doppler mode sending and receiving. Furthermore, because of the simultaneous display in real time, it is necessary to switch instantaneously between the acoustic energy for B mode and Doppler mode. However, as with the abovementioned conventional ultrasonic diagnostic device, when the acoustic energy is controlled by the driver driving voltage generator 10, the instantaneous switching control of the driver driving voltage causes a sharp discharge and charge in the smoothing capacitor 11c because of the driver driving voltage stabilization, and therefore a large electrical current flows to the regulator 11b, generating heat, and problems arise such as delays in the change of driver driving voltage, making instantaneous switching between B mode and Doppler mode difficult because of the risks of reduced reliability and lifetime. Consequently, with conventional ultrasonic diagnostic devices and as shown in the timechart in Figure 5, the level V1 of the high-voltage drive pulse for B mode transmission matches the level V2 of the high-voltage drive pulse for Doppler mode transmission, but the B mode acoustic power is lower and therefore there are problems in that the brightness of B mode tomographic images is lower, amongst other things.

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[0005] The present invention resolves these kind of conventional problems mentioned above, and it aims to carry out smooth and rapid switching between B mode and Doppler mode and to obtain high-brightness B-mode tomographic images in an ultrasonic diagnostic device which is designed to be able to perform real time simultaneous display in B mode and Doppler mode.

[0006]

[Means of Resolving the Problems] In order to achieve the aim mentioned above, the present invention is provided with: an ultrasonic probe for irradiating a subject being examined with ultrasonic waves and receiving echo signals from the subject being examined; a transmitter which comprises a transmission pulse generator for generating transmission pulses of which the transmission pulse duty in Doppler mode is smaller than the transmission pulse duty in B mode, and which supplies a driver pulse to the abovementioned ultrasonic probe; ultrasonic tomographic imaging means for obtaining B mode tomographic images from echo signals received from inside the subject being examined; ultrasonic blood flow information measuring means for obtaining blood flow information in Doppler mode by means of echo signals received from inside the subject being examined; and a system controller for generating control signals for periodically switching between B mode and Doppler mode.

[0007]

[Action] By virtue of the configuration described above, the present invention makes it possible for the transmission pulse generator to vary the transmission pulse duty in B mode and Doppler mode without changing the driver driving voltage, so that it is possible to switch the acoustic energy irradiated from the ultrasonic probe onto the subject being examined, and therefore it is possible to carry out smooth and rapid switching between B mode and Doppler mode in real time simultaneous display in B mode and Doppler mode.

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[0008]

[Exemplary Embodiment] An exemplary embodiment of the present invention will be described below with reference to the figures.

[0009] Figure 1 is a block diagram showing an ultrasonic diagnostic device of an exemplary embodiment of the present invention in which B mode and Doppler mode real time simultaneous display is possible; Figure 2 is a block diagram showing a transmission pulse duty converter which is employed in the same ultrasonic diagnostic device; and Figure 3 is a timechart of the high-voltage drive pulse of the same ultrasonic diagnostic device.

[0010] In figure 1, 1 is an ultrasonic probe for irradiating ultrasonic waves onto a subject being examined and for receiving echo signals from the subject being examined, and 2 is a transmitter for supplying high-voltage drive pulses to the ultrasonic probe 1, said transmitter having: a transmission pulse generator 9 comprising a transmission trigger pulse generator 7 for generating transmission trigger pulse signals and a transmission pulse duty converter 8 for converting transmission trigger pulse signals into transmission pulses of an appropriate duty ratio for B mode and Doppler mode; a driver driving voltage generator 10 which comprises a power circuit 11a, a regulator 11b and a smoothing capacitor 11c, and which generates a drive voltage; and a driver 12 for amplifying transmission pulse signals from the transmission pulse generator 9 up to the level of the driver driving voltage from the driver driving voltage generator 10, and supplying them to the ultrasonic probe 1. 3 is a received echo processor for analog processing of received echo signals from the ultrasonic probe, said processor comprising an amplifier 13, ultrasonic tomographic imaging means 14, ultrasonic blood flow information measuring means 15, and a switch circuit for switching between B mode and Doppler mode. 4 is a digital scan converter for

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converting analog signals from the received echo processor 3 into television signals, 5 is a display part for displaying the television signals from the digital scan converter 4, and 6 is a system controller for generating control signals for periodically switching between B mode and Doppler mode, and for supplying these to the transmission pulse duty converter 8 and the switch circuit 16.

[0011] As shown in Figure 2, the abovementioned transmission pulse duty converter 8 consists of: delay circuits 17, 19 for outputting transmission trigger pulse signals sent from the transmission trigger pulse generator 7 as pulse signals with different lagging phases; AND circuits 18, 20 for outputting transmission pulse signals whereof the duty ratio has been converted from the pulse signals and transmission trigger pulse signals output from the delay circuits 17, 19; and a switch circuit 21 for switching between the B mode and Doppler mode by means of control signals from the system controller 6.

[0012] A description of the operation of the configuration described above will be given below. A transmission trigger pulse signal A generated by the transmission trigger pulse generator 7 inside the transmission pulse generator 9 is supplied to the transmission pulse duty converter 8, and converted to an appropriate duty ratio by means of control signals from the system controller 6. That is to say, as shown in Figure 2, the transmission trigger pulse signal A supplied by the transmission trigger pulse generator 7 is output in the transmission pulse duty converter 8 as pulse signals B and C having different lagging phases from each other, by means of the delay circuit 17 and the delay circuit 19. These pulse signals B and C and the transmission trigger pulse signal A are supplied to the AND circuit 18 and the AND circuit 20, and output as signal pulse signals D and E with a changed duty ratio, respectively. These transmission pulse signals D, E are B mode and Doppler mode transmission pulse signals, respectively, and are supplied to the switch circuit 21, after

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which either is selected for output by means of system control signals in accordance with B mode or Doppler mode from the system controller 6.

[0013] As shown in Figure 1, the abovementioned transmission pulse signal D/signal E are supplied to the driver 12, and they are amplified to the level V1 of the driver driving voltage from the driver driving voltage generator 10. Figure 3 shows the timechart at this time. Next, this high-voltage drive pulse is supplied to the ultrasonic probe 1 and converted to an ultrasonic pulse, after which it is irradiated into the subject being examined. An ultrasonic echo signal in accordance with the acoustic energy of this ultrasonic pulse is received by the ultrasonic probe 1, and is once again converted to an electrical signal, after which it is amplified by the amplifier 13 inside the received echo processor 3 and supplied to the ultrasonic tomographic imaging means 14 for obtaining B mode tomographic images and the ultrasonic blood flow information measuring means 15 for obtaining blood flow information in Doppler mode. These signals are then supplied to the switch circuit 16 for switching between B mode and Doppler mode, and they are respectively supplied to the digital scan converter 4 by means of system control signals in accordance with B mode or Doppler mode from the system controller 6, then converted to television signals, after which they are displayed as B mode tomographic images and Doppler mode blood flow information by means of the display part 5.

[0014] In this way, according to the ultrasonic diagnostic device of the exemplary embodiment described above, it is possible to vary the pulse duty for B mode and Doppler mode, so that it is possible to switch the acoustic energy without changing the driver driving voltage, and it is possible to carry out smooth and rapid switching between B mode and Doppler mode, and therefore it is possible to obtain high-brightness B-mode tomographic images in B mode and Doppler mode real time



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simultaneous display, without any reduction of the acoustic energy in B mode.

[0015]

[Effect of the Invention] As described above, according to the present invention, it is possible to vary the transmission pulse duty in B mode and Doppler mode, so that it is possible to switch the acoustic energy without changing the driver driving voltage, and therefore it is possible to carry out smooth and rapid switching between B mode and Doppler mode. Accordingly, it is possible to obtain high-brightness B-mode tomographic images in B mode and Doppler mode real time simultaneous display, without any reduction of the acoustic energy in B mode.

[Brief Description of the Figures]

[Figure 1] is a schematic block diagram showing the ultrasonic diagnostic device in an exemplary embodiment of the present invention;

[Figure 2] is a block diagram showing a transmission pulse duty converter which is employed in the same ultrasonic diagnostic device;

[Figure 3] is a timechart of the high-voltage drive pulse of the same ultrasonic diagnostic device;

[Figure 4] is a schematic block diagram showing a conventional ultrasonic diagnostic device; and

[Figure 5] is a timechart of the high-voltage drive pulse of the same ultrasonic diagnostic device.

[Explanation of Symbols]

- 1 ultrasonic probe
- 2 transmitter
- 3 received echo processor
- 4 digital scan converter
- 5 display part
- 6 system controller
- 7 transmission trigger pulse generator

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8 transmission pulse duty converter  
9 transmission pulse generator  
10 driver driving voltage generator  
11a power circuit  
11b regulator  
11c smoothing capacitor  
12 driver  
13 amplifier  
14 ultrasonic tomographic imaging means  
15 ultrasonic blood flow information measuring means  
16 switch circuit  
17 delay circuit  
18 AND circuit  
19 delay circuit  
20 AND circuit  
21 switch circuit

[Figure 1]

2 transmitter  
12 driver  
6 system controller  
signal D/signal E  
8 transmission pulse duty converter  
signal A  
9 transmission pulse generator  
7 transmission trigger pulse generator  
13 amplifier  
3 received echo processor  
14 ultrasonic tomographic imaging means  
15 ultrasonic blood flow information measuring means  
4 digital scan converter part  
5 display part

[Figure 2]

system control circuit  
signal D/signal E  
signal D

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18 AND circuit  
signal B  
17 delay circuit  
signal A  
signal E  
20 AND circuit  
signal C  
19 delay circuit

[Figure 3]

↑ high-voltage drive pulse level V  
B mode transmission time: T1  
Doppler mode transmission time: T2

[Figure 5]

↑ high-voltage drive pulse level V  
B mode transmission time: T1  
Doppler mode transmission time: T2

[Figure 4]

2 transmitter  
12 driver  
6 system controller  
7 transmission trigger pulse generator  
13 amplifier  
3 received echo processor  
14 ultrasonic tomographic imaging means  
15 ultrasonic blood flow information measuring means  
4 digital scan converter part  
5 display part



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## 【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 被検体に超音波を放射し、被検体からのエコー信号を受信する超音波探触子と、ドプラモード時の送信パルスデューティがBモード時の送信パルスデューティ以下の送信パルスを発生する送信パルス発生部を有し、上記超音波探触子にドライブパルスを供給する送信部と、被検体内から受信されたエコー信号よりBモード断層像を得る超音波断層像映像化手段と、被検体内から受信されたエコー信号によりドプラモードにおける血流情報を得る超音波血流情報測定手段と、Bモードとドプラモードを周期的に切換える制御信号を発生するシステム制御部とを備えた超音波診断装置。

## 【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【産業上の利用分野】本発明は、生体内の構造や動きを映像化する超音波診断装置に関する。

【0002】

【従来の技術】一般に、被検体の安全な超音波診断を実施するために超音波診断装置の音響パワーは一定の規制を受けている。超音波診断装置のBモード時およびドプラモード時に被検体内に放射される音響エネルギーにおいて、Bモード時では送信パルスの帯域幅を広くとるために送信パルス1波ないし2波の送受信を広範囲に走査するのに対し、ドプラモード時では送信パルスの帯域幅を狭帯域化するために多数波の送信パルスを同一方向に連続的に走査するので、高電圧ドライブパルスのレベルが同一の場合、Bモード時よりもドプラモード時のほうが被検体内が受ける音響エネルギーの平均被曝量は大きくなる。

【0003】従来の超音波診断装置では、この問題を解決するために、図4に示すように、ドライバ駆動電圧発生器10にシステム制御部6からの制御信号を供給することにより、ドプラモード時には高電圧ドライブパルスのレベルをBモード時のそれよりも下げて被検体内が受ける音響エネルギーの平均被曝量を減らしている。

【0004】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】一般に、心臓診断等ではBモードとドプラモードのリアルタイム同時表示が多用されており、これはBモード用とドプラモード用の送受信を周期的に切換えることによって行っている。また、リアルタイムに同時表示する関係上、Bモード時とドプラモード時の音響エネルギーを瞬時に切り替える必要がある。しかし、上記従来の超音波診断装置のようにドライバ駆動電圧発生器10による音響エネルギーの制御では、瞬時のドライバ駆動電圧の切換え制御に対し、ドライバ駆動電圧安定のために平滑コンデンサ11cに急激な充放電が起こるため、レギュレータ11bに大きな電流が流れて発熱したり、ドライバ駆動電圧の変化が遅れる等の問題が発生し、それによる信頼性、寿命の低下の恐れからBモードとドプラモードの瞬時の切換えが

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困難となっている。このため、従来の超音波診断装置では、図5のタイムチャートのようにBモード用送信時の高電圧ドライブパルスのレベルV1をドプラモード用送信時の高電圧ドライブパルスのレベルV2に合わせているが、Bモード時の音響パワーが低下するため、Bモード断層像の輝度が低下する等の問題が発生する。

【0005】本発明は、上記ような従来の問題を解決するものであり、Bモードとドプラモードのリアルタイム同時表示を行うことができるようにした超音波診断装置において、Bモードとドプラモードの切換えを円滑に、かつ高速に行い、Bモードの音響エネルギーを低下させずに輝度の高いBモード断層像を得ることを目的としている。

【0006】

【課題を解決するための手段】本発明は上記目的を達成するために、被検体に超音波を放射し、被検体からのエコー信号を受信する超音波探触子と、ドプラモード時の送信パルスデューティがBモード時の送信パルスデューティ以下の送信パルスを発生する送信パルス発生部を有し、上記超音波探触子にドライブパルスを供給する送信部と、被検体内から受信されたエコー信号よりBモード断層像を得る超音波断層像映像化手段と、被検体内から受信されたエコー信号によりドプラモードにおける血流情報を得る超音波血流情報測定手段と、Bモードとドプラモードを周期的に切換える制御信号を発生するシステム制御部とを備えたものである。

【0007】

【作用】本発明は上記構成により、送信パルス発生部でBモード時およびドプラモード時の送信パルスデューティを変化させ、ドライバ駆動電圧を変化させることなく、超音波探触子から被検体に放射される音響エネルギーを切換えることができるので、Bモードとドプラモードのリアルタイム同時表示において、Bモードとドプラモードの切換えを円滑に、かつ高速に行うことができる。

【0008】

【実施例】以下、本発明の一実施例について図面を参照しながら説明する。

【0009】図1はBモードとドプラモードのリアルタイム同時表示を行うことができるようにした本発明の一実施例における超音波診断装置を示すブロック図、図2は同超音波診断装置に用いる送信パルスデューティ変換器を示すブロック図、図3は同超音波診断装置の高電圧ドライブパルスのタイムチャートである。

【0010】図1において、1は被検体に対して超音波を放射し、被検体からのエコー信号を受信する超音波探触子、2は超音波探触子1に高電圧ドライブパルスを供給するための送信部であり、送信トリガパルス信号を発生する送信トリガパルス発生器7、送信トリガパルス信号をBモード時とドプラモード時の適切なデューティ比

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の送信パルスに変換する送信パルスデューティ変換器8からなる送信パルス発生器9と、電源回路11a、レギュレータ11b、平滑コンデンサ11cからなり、ドライバ駆動電圧を発生するドライバ駆動電圧発生器10と、送信パルス発生器9からの送信パルス信号をドライバ駆動電圧発生器10からのドライバ駆動電圧のレベルまで増幅し、超音波探触子1に供給するドライバ12を有している。3は超音波探触子1からの受信エコー信号をアナログ処理するための受信エコー処理部であり、増幅器13と、超音波断層像映像化手段14と、超音波血流情報測定手段15と、Bモードとドプラモードを切

【0011】上記送信パルスデューティ変換器8は、図2に示すように、送信トリガパルス発生器7から送られた送信トリガパルス信号を異なる遅れ位相のパルス信号として出力する遅延回路17、19と、遅延回路17、19から出力されるパルス信号および送信トリガパルス信号からデューティ比の変換された送信パルス信号を出力するAND回路18、20と、システム制御部6からの制御信号によりBモードとドプラモードを切

【0012】以上の構成において、以下、この動作について説明する。送信パルス発生器9内の送信トリガパルス発生器7によって発生した送信トリガパルス信号Aは送信パルスデューティ変換器8に供給され、システム制御部6からの制御信号により適切なデューティ比に変換される。すなわち、図2に示すように、送信トリガパルス発生器7から供給された送信トリガパルス信号Aは送信パルスデューティ変換器8において、遅延回路17および遅延回路19によりそれぞれ異なる遅れ位相のパルス信号BおよびCとして出力される。これらのパルス信号BおよびCと送信トリガパルス信号AがAND回路18およびAND回路20に供給され、デューティ比の変換された送信パルス信号DおよびEとしてそれぞれ出力される。これらの送信パルス信号D、EはそれぞれBモード時、ドプラモード時の送信パルスであり、スイッチ回路21に供給された後、システム制御部6からのBモード、またはドプラモードに応じたシステム制御信号によりどちらかが選択されて出力される。

【0013】上記送信パルス信号D/信号Eは図1に示すように、ドライバ12に供給され、ドライバ駆動電圧発生器10からのドライバ駆動電圧のレベルV1にまで増幅される。このときのタイムチャートを図3に示す。次に、この高電圧ドライブパルスは超音波探触子1に供

給され、超音波パルスに変換された後、被検体内に放射される。この超音波パルスの音響エネルギーに応じた超音波エコー信号が超音波探触子1により受信され、再び電気信号に変換された後、受信エコー処理部3内の増幅器13により増幅され、Bモード断層像を得るための超音波断層像映像化手段14およびドプラモードにおける血流情報を得るための超音波血流情報測定手段15に供給される。そして、これらの信号はBモードとドプラモードを切

【0014】このように、上記実施例の超音波診断装置によれば、Bモード時およびドプラモード時の送信パルスデューティを可変させることにより、ドライバ駆動電圧を変化させることなく、音響エネルギーを切

【0015】

【発明の効果】以上説明したように本発明によれば、Bモード時およびドプラモード時の送信パルスデューティを可変させることにより、ドライバ駆動電圧を変化させることなく、音響エネルギーを切

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本発明の一実施例における超音波診断装置を示す概略ブロック図

【図2】同超音波診断装置に用いる送信パルスデューティ変換器を示すブロック図

【図3】同超音波診断装置の高電圧ドライブパルスのタイムチャート

【図4】従来の超音波診断装置を示す概略ブロック図

【図5】同超音波診断装置の高電圧ドライブパルスのタイムチャート

【符号の説明】

- 1 超音波探触子
- 2 送信部
- 3 受信エコー処理部
- 4 デジタルスキャンコンバータ部
- 5 表示部
- 6 システム制御部

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- |                 |  |                |
|-----------------|--|----------------|
| 5               |  | 6              |
| 7 送信トリガパルス発生器   |  | 14 超音波断層像映像化手段 |
| 8 送信パルスデューティ変換器 |  | 15 超音波血流情報測定手段 |
| 9 送信パルス発生器      |  | 16 スイッチ回路      |
| 10 ドライバ駆動電圧発生器  |  | 17 遅延回路        |
| 11a 電源回路        |  | 18 AND回路       |
| 11b レギュレータ      |  | 19 遅延回路        |
| 11c 平滑コンデンサ     |  | 20 AND回路       |
| 12 ドライバ         |  | 21 スイッチ回路      |
| 13 増幅器          |  |                |

[illegible]

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【図4】

